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ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

MRS. HOGE, OF THE NORTH WESTERN SANITARY COMMISSION
(BRANCH OF THE U. S. SANITARY COMMISSION),

AT A MEETING OF LADIES, HELD

AT PACKER INSTITUTE, BROOKLYN, L. I.,

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IN AID OF THE GREAT NORTH WESTERN FAIR,

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ADDRESS.

WHEN the echo of the first rebel gun at Sumter fell on the nation's ear, and stirred its patriotic heart, with one accord, men of all sections and of various shades of political feeling, seized their muskets, fell into line of battle, and resolved not to falter till rebellion should be crushed and the honor of the old flag justified. The women of the land, with swelling hearts and uplifted eyes asked, "Lord, what wilt thou have us to do?" The marvelous organization of the U. S. Sanitary Commission, with its various modes of heavenly activity, pointed out the way, saying, "the men must fight, the women must work—this is the way, follow me." In accepting this call, there has been no reservation. Duty has been taken up, in whatever shape presented, nothing refused that would soothe a sorrow, staunch a wound, or heal the sickness of the humblest soldier in the ranks. Some have drifted into positions entirely new and heretofore avoided. They have gone forth from the bosom of their families to visit hospitals, camps and battle-fields; some even, to appear as we do before you to-day, to plead for aid for our sick and wounded soldiers, suffering and dying, that we may live. The memory of their heroism is inspiring—the recollection of their patience and long suffering is overwhelming. They form the most striking human exemplification of divine meekness and submission the world has ever seen, and bring to mind continually the passage, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth."

As I cast my eyes around to-day on the hundreds of bright young faces, eagerly bent to hear the soldier's story, I appre-

ciate as I never have done before, what these brave men have won, and from what they have saved us. But for these noble warriors, who have stood a living wall between us and destruction, where would have been our schools, our colleges, our churches, our property, our government, our lives? Southern soil has been watered with their blood, the Mississippi fringed with their graves, measured by acres instead of numbers. The shadow of death has passed over almost every household, and left desolate hearthstones and vacant chairs. Thousands of mothers, wives and sisters at home have died and made no sign, while their loved ones have been hidden in southern hospitals, prisons and graves—the separation, thank God, is short, the union eternal. I have only a simple story of these martyred heroes to tell you. I have been privileged to visit a hundred thousand of them in hospitals; meekly and cheerfully lying *there*, that you and I may be enabled to meet *here*, in peace and comfort to-day.

Could I, by the touch of a magician's wand, pass before you in solemn review, this army of sufferers, you would say a tithe cannot be told.

The first great hospital I visited was Mound City, twelve miles from Cairo. It contained twelve hundred beds, furnished with dainty sheets, and pillows and shirts, from the Sanitary Commission, and ornamented with boughs of fresh apple blossoms, placed there by tender female nurses to refresh the languid frames of their mangled inmates. As I took my slow and solemn walk through this congregation of suffering humanity, I was arrested by the bright blue eyes, and pale but dimpled cheek, of a boy of nineteen summers. I perceived he was bandaged like a mummy, and could not move a limb; but still he smiled. The nurse who accompanied me said, "We call this boy our miracle. Five weeks ago, he was shot down at Donelson; both legs and arms shattered. To-day, with great care, he has been turned for the first time, and never a murmur has escaped his lips, but grateful words and pleasant looks have cheered us." Said I to the smiling boy, some absent mother's pride, "how long

did you lie on the field after being shot?" "From Saturday morning till Sunday evening," he replied, "and then I was chopped out, for I had frozen feet." "How did it happen that you were left so long?" "Why, you see," said he, "they couldn't stop to bother with us, *because they had to take the fort.*" "But," said I, "did you not feel 'twas cruel to leave you to suffer so long?" "Of course not! how could they help it? *They had to take the fort,* and when they did, we forgot our sufferings, and all over the battle-field went up cheers from the wounded, even from the dying. Men that had but one arm raised that, and voices so weak that they sounded like children's, helped to swell the sound." "Did you suffer much?" His brow contracted, as he said, "I don't like to think of that; but never mind, the doctor tells me I won't lose an arm or a leg, and I'm going back to have another chance at them. There's one thing I can't forget though," said he, as his sunny brow grew dark, "Jem and I (nodding at the boy in the adjoining cot) lived on our father's neighboring farms in Illinois; we stood beside each other and fell together. As he knows, we saw fearful sights that day. We saw poor wounded boys stripped of their clothing. They cut our's off, when every movement was torture. When some resisted, they were pinned to the earth with bayonets, and left writhing like worms, to die by inches. I can't forgive the devils for that." "I fear you've got more than you bargained for." "Not a bit of it; we went in for better or worse and if we got worse, we must not complain." Thus talked the beardless boy, nine months only from his mother's wing. As I spoke, a moan, a rare sound in a hospital, fell on my ear. I turned, and saw a French boy quivering with agony and crying for help. Alas! he had been wounded, driven several miles in an ambulance, with his feet projecting, had them frightfully frozen, and the surgeon had just decided the discolored, useless members must be amputated, and the poor boy was begging for the operation. Beside him, lay a stalwart man, with fine face, the fresh blood staining his bandages, his dark, damp hair clustering round his marble forehead.

He extended his hand feebly and essayed to speak, as I bent over him, but speech had failed him. He was just brought in from a gunboat, where he had been struck with a piece of shell, and was slipping silently but surely into eternity. Two days afterward I visited Jefferson Barracks Hospital. In passing through the wards, I noticed a woman seated beside the cot of a youth, apparently dying. He was insensible to all around; she seemed no less so. Her face was bronzed and deeply lined with care and suffering. Her eyes were bent on the ground, her arms folded, her features rigid as marble. I stood beside her, but she did not notice me. I laid my hand upon her shoulder, but she heeded me not. I said "is this young man a relative of yours?" no answer came. "Can't I help you?" With a sudden start that electrified me, her dry eyes almost starting from the sockets and her voice husky with agony, she said, pointing her attenuated finger at the senseless boy, "he is the last of seven sons—six have died in the army, and the doctor says he must die to-night." The flash of life passed from her face as suddenly as it came, her arms folded over her breast, she sank in her chair, and became, as before, the rigid impersonation of agony. As I passed through another hospital ward, I noticed a man whose dejected figure said plainly, "he had turned his face to the wall to die." His limb had been amputated, and he had just been told his doom. Human nature rebelled. He cried out, "I am willing to die, if I could but see my wife and children once more." In the silence that followed this burst of agony, the low voice of a noble woman, who gave her time and abundant means to the sick and wounded soldiers, was heard in prayer for him. The divine influence overcame his struggling heart, and as she concluded, he said, "Thy will, O God, be done!" "'Tis a privilege, even taus, to die for one's country." Before the midnight hour he was at rest. The vacant bed told the story next morning.

At one time I spent six weeks with the army on the move, having in charge a large amount of hospital stores, and having the privilege of personally dispensing them to those who so

greatly needed them. As the steamer on which we had our headquarters was tied up for the night, I was sent for by the colonel of a Wisconsin regiment, in great haste, to see a young man who was very ill on board the steamer Empress. As we entered the boat we were met by the colonel, who said, "Ladies, I am in great distress; I have in my regiment a young man who had graduated, studied law, and was about to form a legal partnership with his father, when my regiment was forming. He was an *only child*, and a young man of rare promise. He enlisted in my regiment. The day we left Wisconsin his father and mother were with us. The mother, forgetting all but her only child, threw her arms around me and said, 'O colonel, for God's sake, guard my treasure, for it is my all; and now I'm afraid he's going to die.'" We threaded our way through the long cabin, on which lay rows of sick soldiers, with no pillow but a hard knapsack, no bed but the bare floor, and no clothing but that in which they had marched and picketed for many weary weeks. The young man referred to had been placed in a state room. As we entered, he drew the soiled blanket over his once neat collar and neck-tie, that had not been removed, and said, "Ladies, don't come in; I'm too filthy to be seen." As he lay there, I thought I had seldom seen a finer face—a broad forehead, clearly cut features and dark expressive eyes, betokened intellect and refinement. We talked with him cheerfully; told him the colonel had granted him a furlough, to be removed to our boat, to be carefully nursed till we could place him in his mother's care. He looked so bright, and spoke so cheerfully, that we cherished hopes of his early recovery. We promised to send a stretcher for him in the morning, and after making all arrangements for his comfort, and giving him a cup of tea, we left him. After leaving the room, I thought, what if he should die? Who will receive his last words, or know his last thoughts? I turned back and said, "we shall send for you in the morning, if we live; but life is so uncertain, especially in the army on the move: suppose we never meet on earth again, what would you say?"

Looking serenely up, he said, "I understand you. Should I die, tell my mother, as I have lain here these weary days, all her early teachings have come back, and I trust have done their work. My sabbath-school lessons, that she struggled to teach me, are now remembered and prized. Tell her I hope to meet her in that heaven, where she is sure to go; and tell her I never regretted the step I have taken. She must not mourn for me as without hope, for if I die 'twill be in a glorious cause, and our separation will be short." I said, "thank God! I hope you may be spared long to comfort your parents and serve your country and your Maker." He thanked me earnestly for returning, and as I was told talked cheerfully for an hour about going home. The next morning we sent a stretcher, but the answer came back, that William had gone home, not to his mother, but to his Father's arms. Three weeks later, on my route to Vicksburg, I met a friend of the family in search of William's body. He said the parents were longing for the precious casket of their jewel to lay it to rest, under the old willow tree at the homestead. He said they had well nigh sunk under the crushing blow, but were upheld by his parting words of love, and faith and heroism, which I had transmitted to them—God help them in their loneliness.

After the first repulse of our army from Vicksburg, sad stories of sickness and suffering reached the ears of the Sanitary Commission. I was entrusted by the Commission with a choice supply of stores, and, accompanied by two gentlemen, started for Vicksburg. The river was high—the weather miserably rainy and depressing; guerillas constantly threatening our boat—everything portentous and gloomy. After a painful but rapid journey, we reached Young's Point, when I was immediately transferred, with my stores, to the *Silver Wave*, the Sanitary boat of the U. S. Commission. For ten days I stood in the little store house of the Commission, dealing out life, and health, and happiness to our emaciated soldiers. Would that the croakers at home, who excuse themselves from giving, and cool the zeal of others, could have seen what I

have seen. All doubts would vanish, and the nerveless arms be strengthened for renewed efforts. As I stood at the rude counter, I had beside me a barrel of soft crackers, a bag of onions, a sack of potatoes, a box of herring, a box of pepper, and a box of home-made gingerbread. Green tea, lemons, codfish and white sugar completed the assortment. The news spread quickly that a lady was on the Sanitary boat with comforts for the sick. Requisitions poured in rapidly, for, alas! the need was great. The number of the hospital, the exact number of sick men, the character of supplies needed, were carefully designated, signed by the surgeon, as well as a solemn pledge given that not one jot or tittle should be used but for the sick soldiers. I believe, with rare exceptions, it was kept. Careful subsequent examinations of all the hospitals supplied proved it. As I stood at my post, convalescent soldiers, that we would call skeletons at home, by dint of canes and crutches and friendly hands, came in solemn procession to receive for themselves these treasures. I rejoice to be able to say I did not turn one away empty-handed, and also remark, to the honor of the brave soldiers, that not one applied whose appearance was not a complete certificate of his necessity. I said to one of these emaciated men, "will you have a few soft crackers?" The only answer was an outstretched hand and tearful eye. "Shall I give you an onion?" "O, how I've longed for that, and wished I had ten cents to buy one from the sutler!" To another I said, "Perhaps you would like a lemon?" "A lemon! just let me look at and smell one; I believe 'twould cure me." "How about some home-made gingerbread?" That always brought the gushing tears, and was, without fail, just like wife or mother's. One poor fellow, who was obliged to seize both railings to support himself up the narrow stairway, opened his battered haversack and drew forth a small paper of coffee. Said he, "I know you don't sell anything here, but I thought if I could change this coffee I've saved from my rations, for a little green tea, I'd get an appetite. If I could only get a cup of tea like mother made, I believe I should get well." I motioned back the parcel, for

I could not speak, and gave him a little package containing white sugar, and a lemon and some green tea, two herrings, two onions, and some pepper. He looked at the parcel a moment and said, "Is that *all* for me?" I bowed assent. He covered his pinched face with his thin hands, and burst into a low sobbing cry. I laid my hand upon his shoulder and said, "Why do you weep!" "God bless the women!" he sobbed out, "what should we do but for them? I came from father's farm, where all knew plenty; I've lain sick these three months; I've seen no woman's face, nor heard her voice, nor felt her warm hand till to-day, and it unmans me; but don't think I rue my bargain, for I don't. I've suffered much and long, but don't let them know at home. May be I'll never have a chance to tell them how much, but I'd go through it all for the old flag!" "Who knows," I said "but the very luxuries I've given you, have been sent from the Aid Society to which your mother belongs?" "I shouldn't wonder," he replied, "for my mother writes me she never lets anything keep her away from the meetings. I'm glad of it, for I don't know what would become of us poor fellows but for the Sanitary Commission." He wiped away his tears with the back of his hand, gave me his "good bye," "God bless you," and said, "I feel that I've turned the corner; I haven't been as strong for months as I feel now." With the help of *one* railing he descended the stairs, and called out from the landing, "farewell, God bless you!" Do you ask me do the soldiers receive what they need? I answer, not one-fourth, because it is not there to give them. The true way to put an end to the complaints of returned soldiers, that their wants are not fully met, is to *quadruple*, not *diminish* supplies. The *pretended* or *misguided friends of the soldier*, little realize their work, when they thus check liberality to that heaven-born charity, the U. S. Sanitary Commission. I speak earnestly, for I have seen its work in scores of western hospitals, in the camp and the battle-field. I have accompanied it in its labor of love as it has followed the destroying angel, binding up mangled limbs, clothing emaciated forms, pillowing aching heads, giving nourishment

to exhausted bodies, drawing back from the brink of eternity husbands, sons, brothers, to bless their country and their homes again. Where one testifies against it, thousands bless it and raise up their voices and pens in its behalf. Thank God! it has a hold on the hearts of the people, and the brave men for whose benefit it was inaugurated. But for some clamor, the Sanitary Commission would lack one evidence of heavenly approval. "Woe be to you, when all men speak well of you." It imitates the Blessed Master in His mission, and shares in His reproach.

In one of my frequent trips to the Army, on my way to Vicksburg, the Steamer on which we were traveling was seized at Columbus as a government transport. The beautiful Ruth was despoiled of her gay trappings—they were laid away for some future gala day, and she put on the homely and sober habilaments of war. The decks were covered with our boys in blue; a Brigadier General took command of the boat and we were fairly embarked in the army on the move, under military orders. While these great changes were being rapidly made, I strolled on the levee, and as usual found myself in the midst of groups of soldiers. The sun had sunk below the horizon, and left a gorgeous retinue of golden clouds to tell of his departure—the turbid Mississippi, with its deep monotone, rolled majestically toward the sea—camp fires all along the shore were becoming visible in the gathering evening—the sound of fife and drum mingled with the busy hum of preparations for a move—the frowning fortifications of Columbus stood out boldly and clearly against the evening sky, while the lights and fires of a score of steamers looked like an illumination for victory. There was a glorious uncertainty in all our movements, that added mystery and romance to the scene—we knew we were going to battle, but none knew where, or when, or how, save the officers in command. A soldier, sick or well, knows not his destination, but obeys orders whenever given, and asks no questions. I passed from group to group, and said a cheering word, and told how we loved, and honored, and labored for them at home. It re-

quired but a moment to gather large audiences, and oh, what listeners! The words home, wife, mother, always brought cheers and tears, worshipful reverence, and grateful thanks. I believe there does not exist, nor ever has existed on this earth, a more noble, brave, honorable, tender, patient, and enduring race of men than our Union Soldiers. As I turned from the last group, to walk up to the fortifications, I heard a quick step, and turning saw a fine young man, in the uniform of an orderly sergeant—he touched his cap and said, “Madam excuse me, but if you will not consider it impertinent, I would ask the favor of accompanying you; I’ve always been accustomed to female society, and during the nine months I have been in the army, you are the first lady I have spoken to,” said I, “I consider it a great honor to be escorted by a soldier, and as you are about the age of one of my sons, I should be glad to have your strong arm to lean on, as I ascend the hill, and you can tell me something of your history.” “I am the last of my mother’s eight children,” he said solemnly, “and she is a widow; I had a fine position, was Postmaster in a flourishing town in Iowa, and could not ask for brighter prospects than I had, when the war broke out. At the first call, I felt that I must go and said so to my mother; she faltered, saying, ‘John, not yet; so many mothers have more than one child, and *some that have but one are not widows.*’ I felt ’twas true, especially as father had left her to my care. The second call came; as it happened, ’twas harder than ever to go, for I had another’s consent to ask, beside my mother’s then—Next door to us lived an orphan girl, whom I had known and loved from childhood—I never knew how much, till it appeared possible I might have to leave her. Before I knew it, I had told her all, and found she loved me also—We were engaged to be married—Nevertheless, I felt I must go now, and at once told mother—She turned pale, but said, ‘John, I’ll be as good as my word, go, and God bless you—But what of Mary?’ I’ll see her at once, I said, and in five minutes I was beside her in the porch, where she stood every evening, waiting for me, on the very

spot where we first pledged our troth. In the dim twilight, her quick woman's eye read something; she said quickly, 'What's the matter John, are you ill?' 'Not ill, but sad, for I must leave you Mary—the President has called for 300,000 more, and I must be going—Mother says yes; what says my darling?' The color had faded from her cheek, but her eye brightened, as she said, 'God forbid I should stand in your way; as your mother said, I say, go and God bless you; I've been fearing and hoping for this: I love you better than ever, and should have felt ashamed, had you held back: but John, one thing must be done; I never expected to say this, but we must be married; if you are sick or wounded, I must go to you, and when you leave, I must live with your mother;' she whispered, as she lay her head upon my shoulder, 'and John, I would rather be your widow, than another man's bride.' Next day we were married, I enlisted, and before nightfall was on my way to my Regiment; strange as it may seem, I never have regretted the step. Mother and Mary live together, and write such cheerful letters twice a week, that I could not be despondent if I would. They say, 'keep up your courage John, God takes care of us, and will of you; we expect you home at the end of the war, loaded with honors, and oh, what a welcome we'll give you!' I brought my wedding coat with me, and looked at it with smiles and tears, night and morning, as it hung up in my tent; some villain stole it last night, and the gold of California could not have bought it. No matter, I have their daguerrotypes; I wish it were not too dark for you to see them." Just at this point, we had reached the brow of the hill, crowned with its frowning battlements. The golden purple had faded from the clouds, the dimly defined battle-field of Belmont lay across the stream, the heavy moan of the father of waters, mingled with the distant hum of moving squadrons, as they filed into the boats; the heavy tread of the sentinels, and the booming of the evening gun, completed the warlike character of this strange, but fascinating scene. We stood in silence—our hearts were too full for utterance. I could but feel, as my heart beat

tumultuously, why is it, O my God, that some suffer and sacrifice so much in this great struggle for national existence, while others pass heedless on, reaping the fruit of their bloody sweat and toil, and talk of self given and labors bestowed on these heroes? Let the heart of every man and woman echo, why? My young friend passed his hand across his eyes hastily, as he said, "don't think I would have things otherwise; I counted the cost, and am willing to pay the price, be it what it may." I said, "a moment since, I pitied you, but now I envy you; you are happy in your choice; are sustained by wife and mother; know what self-sacrificing patriotism means, and trust in God implicitly." "You are right," he said, "I will write your words to Mother and Mary, for I am proud of them both." We walked down the hill rapidly, and were soon at John's camp. He said, "'tis past taps, I must leave you; my Colonel won't be hard, he knows I'm never away in mischief; I'll tell him I've been almost home to-night. I must tell you, Madam, I believe God sent you here; for the first time in nine months, I had a touch of home-sickness, just before I met you; 'tis all gone now—farewell! God bless and keep you." He vaulted lightly over the ditch around the camp, and was soon lost among the white tents of the encampment. I know not whether John still lives to honor his regiment, or whether he lives in a hospital, or sleeps in a Southern grave; one thing I know, living or dying, he is one of the Lord's own, and will shine among His jewels. In a few days after this interview, I entered the Gayoso Block Hospital at Memphis, under the care of Mother Bisherdyke of great renown; I longed for an army of doubters to be with me there. My visit was unexpected, and happened at suppertime. As I entered the door, I met Mother Bisherdyke in the convalescent dining hall, where everything on the table was nutritious and appetising. As she was on her way to the hospital wards, I accompanied her; there lay 600 freshly wounded men from the battle of Arkansas Post; each man was eating such food as we would have given them at home. The air was perfectly pure, and the snowy sheets,

and shirts, and soft pillows were refreshing. Mrs. B. knew every man by name as by intuition, and as she passed, spoke to one and another. When we reached the centre of the room, she said, "boys, this is Mrs. H. from Chicago, from the N. W. San. Com. Look at your shirts, your sheets, your pillows, they are all marked with the name of the San. Com.; your good suppers to night, all came from there, and what you get every day comes from the same place." As from one voice, arose the cry, "three cheers for the San. Com.—God bless the women at home." As we passed from cot to cot, Mrs. B. would ask, William, "how does your egg suit you?" "Exactly right mother." "Well, John, how goes the milk toast?" "Bully, mother, tastes like the old cow's milk at home," said a grey headed man, with a shattered arm, "Mother, I don't believe my wife could beat that cup of green tea, with white sugar, you sent me to-night; it has about cured me; I feel as chirky as a robin." At one cot knelt a bright, bronzed-faced, motherly woman, feeding her husband cautiously; his jaw had been shot away, the splintered fragments removed, and he lay a woful spectacle, not able to speak intelligently. "How do you feel to-night, James," said mother B., "all right now, since she's come," said he, laying his hand fondly on her head. The constant woman's face beamed with joy, as she said, "I believe I can take him home next week." As I was about to leave, I stood in their midst, and said, "boys you look so bright and happy and seem so cheerful, I think you must be shamming; you are all heroes, but are you badly wounded?" "Why shouldn't we be happy?" cried out a brave manly voice, "We left all to fight for the old flag, and put it where it belongs, and we left it flying at Arkansas Post, if we did get hit." Another cried out cheerfully, "Madam, what do you call this?" and drew aside the sheet, to show the stump of a leg. Another pointed to where the strong right arm had been, and another to his bandaged head, from which a piece of shell had been extracted. A Wisconsin battery boy beside me, called out, "what do you say of me? One of my arms was taken off nine months ago, and the Doc-

tor says the other must go to-morrow. I've been in nine battles, and been wounded every time, but "the Post" has used me up. What am I to do in the world, not 20 years old, and no arms?" "My grand fellow," said I, "the women will take care of you. God never spared your life, but for some great purpose, and I believe you will live to bless and be blessed." Tears burst from his eyes, as the boys cheered, and he said fervently, "thank you for that."

The long and weary siege of Vicksburg had continued many months previous to the terrific assaults of our brave army on the fortifications in the rear of that rebel stronghold. On the 19th and 22d of May, were made those furious attacks, up steep acclivities, in the teeth of bristling fortifications, long lines of rifle-pits, and sharp-shooters who fringed the hill tops and poured their murderous fire into our advancing ranks. It would seem impossible that men could stand, much less advance, under such a galling fire. They were mowed down as wheat before the sickle, but they faltered not. The vacant places of the fallen were instantly filled, and inch by inch they gained the heights of Vicksburg. When the precipice was too steep for the horses to draw up the artillery, our brave boys did the work themselves, and then fought and conquered. When they had gained the topmost line of rifle-pits, they entered in and took possession; and when I made my last visit to the Army of the Mississippi, there they were ensconced as conies in the rock, enduring the heat of a vertical sun, and crouching, like beasts of prey, to escape the rebel bullets from the earthworks, almost within touching distance. The fierce and bloody struggle had filled long lines of field-hospitals with mangled victims, whose sufferings were soothed and relieved beyond what I could have conceived possible, and it rejoiced my heart to see there the comforts and luxuries of the Sanitary Commission. The main body of the army lay encamped in the valleys, at the foot of the rifle-pits, and spread its lines in a semi-circle to a distance of fourteen miles. The health of the army was perfect, its spirit jubilant. They talked of the rebels as prisoners, as though they were guarding them,

and answered questions implying doubt of success, with a scornful laugh, saying, "why, the boys in the rear could whip Johnson, and we not know it; and we could take Vicksburg if we chose, and not disturb them." Each regiment, if not each man, felt competent for the work. One glorious day in June, accompanied by an officer of the 8th Missouri, I set out for the rifle-pits. When I reached them, I found the heat stifling; and as I bent to avoid the whizzing minies, and the falling branches of the trees, cut off by an occasional shell, I felt that war was a terrible reality. The intense excitement of the scene, the manly, cheerful bearing of the veterans, the booming of the cannon from the battlements, and the heavy mortars that were ever and anon throwing their huge iron balls into Vicksburg, and the picturesque panorama of the army encamped below, obliterated all sense of personal danger or fatigue. After a friendly talk with the men in the extreme front, and a peep again and again through the loop-holes, watched and fired upon continually by the wary foe, I descended to the second ledge, where the sound of music reached us. We followed it quickly, and in a few moments stood behind a rude litter of boughs, on which lay a grey-haired soldier, face downward, with a comrade on either side. They did not perceive us, but sang on the closing line of the verse:

"Come, humble sinner, in whose breast
A thousand thoughts revolve;
Come with thy sins and fears oppressed,
And make this last resolve."

I joined in the second verse:

"I'll go to Jesus, though my sins
Have like a mountain rose,
I know His courts, I'll enter in,
Whatever may oppose."

In an instant, each man turned and would have stopped, but I sang on with moistened eyes, and they continued. At the close, one burst out, "Why, ma'am, where did you come from? Did you drop from heaven into these rifle-pits?" "You are

the first lady we have seen here," and then the voice was choked with tears. I said, "I have come from your friends at home to see you, and bring messages of love and honor. I have come to bring you the comforts that we owe you, and love to give. I've come to see if you receive what they send you." "Do they think so much of us as that? Why, boys, we can fight another year on that, can't we?" "Yes! yes!" they cried, and almost every hand was raised to brush away the tears. "Why, boys," said I, "the women at home don't think of much else but the soldiers. If they meet to sew, 'tis for you; if they have a good time, 'tis to gather money for the Sanitary Commission; if they meet to pray, 'tis for the soldiers; and even the little children, as they kneel at their mother's knees to lisp their good-night prayers, say, "God bless the soldiers." A crowd of eager listeners had gathered from their hiding places, as birds from the rocks. Instead of cheers as usual, I could only hear an occasional sob and *feel* solemn silence. The gray-haired veteran drew from his breast-pocket a daguerreotype, and said, "Here are my wife and daughters. I think any man might be proud of them, and they all work for the soldiers." And then each man drew forth the inevitable daguerreotype, and held it for me to look at, with pride and affection. There were aged mothers and sober matrons, bright-eyed maidens and laughing cherubs, all carried next these brave hearts and cherished as life itself. Blessed art! It seems as though it were part of God's preparation work, for this long, cruel war. These mute memorials of home and its loved ones have proved the talisman of many a tempted heart and the solace of thousands of suffering, weary veterans. I had much to do and prepared to leave. I said "Brave men, farewell! When I go home I'll tell them that men that never flinch before a foe, sing hymns of praise in the rifle pits of Vicksburg. I'll tell them that eyes that never weep for their own suffering, overflow at the name of home and the sight of the pictures of their wives and children. They'll feel more than ever that such men cannot be conquered, and that enough cannot be done for them."

Three cheers for the women at home, and a grasp of multitudes of hard, honest hands, and I turned away to visit other regiments. The officer who was with me, grasped my hand; "Madam," said he, "promise me you'll visit my regiment to-morrow—'twould be worth a victory to them. You don't know what good a lady's visit to the army does. These men, whom you have seen to-day, will talk of your visit for six months to come. Around the camp fires, in the rifle-pits, in the dark night or on the march, they will repeat your words, describe your looks, your voice, your size, your dress, and all agree in one respect, that you look like an angel, and exactly like each man's wife or mother." Such reverence have our soldiers for upright, tender-hearted women. In the valley beneath, just having exchanged the front line of rifle-pits, with the regiment now occupying it, encamped my son's regiment. Its ranks had been fearfully thinned by the terrible assaults of the 19th and 21st of May, as they had formed the right wing of the line of battle on that fearful day. I knew most of them personally, and as they gathered round me and inquired after home and friends, I could but look in sadness for many familiar faces, to be seen no more on earth. I said "Boys, I was present when your colors were presented to you by the Board of Trade. I heard your colonel pledge himself that you would bring those colors home or cover them with your blood as well as glory. I want to see them, if you have them still, after your many battles." With great alacrity, the man in charge of them, ran into an adjoining tent and brought them forth, carefully wrapped in an oil-silk covering. He drew it off and flung the folds to the breeze. "What does this mean?" I said. "How soiled and tattered, and rent and faded they look—I should not know them." The man who held them said, "why, ma'am, 'twas the smoke and balls did that." "Ah! so it must have been," I said. "Well, you have covered them with glory, but how about the blood!" A silence of a minute followed, and then a low voice said, "four were shot down holding them—two are dead and two in the hospital." "Verily, you have redeemed your

pledge," I said solemnly. "Now, boys, sing 'Rally round the Flag, Boys!'"—and they did sing it. As it echoed through the valley, as we stood within sight of the green sward that had been reddened with the blood of those that had fought for and upheld it, methought the angels might pause to hear it, for it was a sacred song—the song of freedom to the captive, of hope to the oppressed of all nations. Since then, it seems almost profane to sing it with thoughtlessness or frivolity. After a touching farewell, I stepped into the ambulance, surrounded by a crowd of the brave fellows. The last sound that reached my ears was cheers for the Sanitary Commission and the women at home. I soon reached the regimental hospital, where lay the wounded color-bearers. As I entered the tent, the surgeon met me and said, "I'm so glad you've come, for R—— has been calling for you all day." As I took his parched, feverish hand, he said, "Oh! take me home to my wife and little ones to die." There he lay, as noble a specimen of vigorous manhood as I had ever looked upon. His great broad chest heaved with emotion, his dark eyes were brilliant with fever, his cheeks flushed with almost the hue of health, his rich brown hair clustering in soft curls over his massive forehead, was difficult to realize that he was entering the portals of eternity. I walked across the tent to the doctor, and asked if he could go with me. He shook his head, and said before midnight he would be at rest. I shrunk from his eager gaze as I approached him. "What does he say?" he asked quickly. "You can't be moved." The broad chest rose and fell, his whole frame quivered. There was a pause of a few minutes. He spoke first and said, "Will you take my message to her?" "I will," I said. "if I go five hundred miles to do it." Take her picture from under my pillow, and my children's also. Let me see it once more." As I held them for him, he looked earnestly and then said, "tell her not to fret about me, for we shall meet in heaven. Tell her 'twas all right that I came. I don't regret it, and she must not. Tell her to train these two little boys, that we loved so well, to go to heaven to us, and tell her to

bear my loss like a soldier's wife and a Christian. He was exhausted by the effort. I sat beside him till his consciousness was gone, repeating God's precious promises. As the sun went to rest that night, he slept in his Father's bosom. I will say no more. From the storehouse of memory, so filled with thrilling incidents, 'tis difficult to select. Enough, however, has been said, to teach the women of the land a lesson concerning the heavy debt they owe these heroes—enough to furnish them with arguments to meet the cavils of the unbelieving or captious, and with rebukes for the pernicious and selfish, who dare complain that they are perpetually besought to give to the soldiers, when the meanest, the comeliest of them all who has given his limb, his eye, his health, perchance his heart's blood, has given more than they all. Women of the North, arise! put on your armor anew. Let your persistence be measured only by the soldier's endurance. Now, when they have fought and *won an honorable peace*—when the bow of promise gilds the horizon, and the watchman says "All's well!"—relax not your efforts. Let the army of sick and wounded soldiers receive your grateful offerings, not as a bribe for future efforts, but a tribute of gratitude and justice; and when the peace bells ring and the bonfires gleam, let Charity not doff her robes, but gird herself afresh, and tarry not till every sick and wounded soldier shall be restored to home and friends if he has them; and if not, have a "Home" provided for him. May it be said of woman, as of old, "she hath done what she could."

